

Message Text

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ACTION EA-09

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-04 H-01

INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 IO-13 /079 W

-----100558Z 119965 /15/20

O R 090445Z FEB 77 CORRECTED COPY MRN

FM AMEMBASSY KUALA LUMPUR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 6205

AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE

INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD

AMEMBASSY MANILA

AMEMBASSY RANGOON

AMEMBASSY SINGAPORE

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE KUALA LUMPUR 0905

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y MRN 0905 VICE 9095

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, MY, IN

SUBJECT: INDIAN PRESIDENT AILING; CANCELS VISITS TO PHILIPPINES

AND BURMA

1. LOCAL PRESS REPORTED THIS MORNING (FEB 9) THAT INDIAN PRESIDENT SRI FAKHARUDDIN ALI AHMED, CURRENTLY ON FOUR-DAY STATE VISIT HERE, IS SUFFERING FROM "EXHAUSTION," FORCING CANCELLATION REMAINING ACTIVITIES ON HIS AGENDA AS WELL AS SCHEDULED VISITS TO MANILA AND RANGOON. PRESIDENT FAKHARUKKIN'S DEPARTURE HAS BEEN POSTPONED A DAY (TO THURSDAY, FEB 10) TO ALLOW HIM ADDITIONAL REST. HIS PERSONAL PHYSICIAN REPORTS THAT ALTHOUGH EXHAUSTED, HE IS "ALL RIGHT" AND FEELONG "VERY MUCH BETTER."

2. PRESIDENT FAKHARUKKIN, ACCOMPANIED BY WIFE AND 45 MAN ENTOURAGE, RECEIVED RED CARPET TREATMENT ON HIS ARRIVAL
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HERE. THEY WERE GREETED BY THE KING AND QUEEN AND INTRODUCED TO PRIME MINISTER DATUK HUSSEIN ONN AND DATIN SUHAILA AND OTHER GOM LUMINEARIES. ACTIVITIES UNTIL THE PRESIDENT FELL ILL INCLUDED STATE BANQUET IN THEIR HONOR AT THE PALACE AND OTHER CEREMONIAL FUNCTIONS AND MEETINGS. CANCELLED FUNCTIONS INCLUDED VISIT TO PENANG AND TOUR OF

INDIA-MALAYSIA TEXTILE MILL, A RETURN BANQUET FOR THE KING AND QUEEN, AND A ROUND OF GOLF PRIOR TO HIS PLANNED DEPARTURE FOR MANILA.

3. COMMENT: VISIT HAS RECEIVED PROMINENT MEDICA COVERAGE AND IS VIEWED BY LOCAL OBSERVERS AS LARGELY CEREMONIAL, SYMBOLOZING HISTORIC LINKS BETWEEN THE TWO NATIONS, THEIR PRESENT ASSOCIATION IN NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT AND THEIR ECONOMIC TIES. FORMER PRIME MINISTER TUNKU ABDUL RAHMAN REPORTEDLY HAD A SPECIAL AFFECTION FOR LATER PRIME MINISTER NEHRU, WHO HE HAD MET FREQUENTLY, BUT HIS SUCCESSOR, LATE TUN ABDUL RAZAK, PLACED GREATER EMPHASIS ON THE ISLAMIC NATIONS AND HENCE WAS FELT TO BE MORE ORIENTED TO PAKISTAN THAN INDIA. PRIME MINISTER HUSSEIN ONN WAS TRAINED AT DEHRA DUN AD SERVED AS AN OFFICER IN THE INDIAN ARMY IN WW II. MANY BELIEVE, THEREFORE, THAT HE ATTACHES GREATER IMPORTANCE TO RELATIONS WITH INDIAN THAN DID HIS PRECEDESSOR. FROM A PUBLIC RLATIONS POINT OF VIEW, FAKHARUKKIN'S VISIT IS UNDOUBTELY A PLUS FOR THE GOI, SINCE IT REMINDS THE PREDOMINANTLY MUSLIM MALAYSIAN POPULACE THAT INDIA'S HEAD OF STATE IS A FELLOW MUSLIM. UNDERHILL

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